

November 5, 2014

Notes from Environmental Workforce Professional Learning Community (PLC)—Cycle 11, Session 9

Topics: Current Happenings / Updates from Washington as of November 5, 2014
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Current Happenings / Updates from Washington as of November 5, 2014

Look forward to the FY2015 Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training (EWDJT) RFP being issued soon, most likely in the next few weeks. We will forward the announcement when it is issued. Organizations not familiar with using grants.gov need to research the site as soon as possible as it takes some time and effort for first-time users to sign up. All applicants will be required to submit through grants.gov.

NOTE: EPA will conduct 2 webinars addressing the Grant Application Guidelines/Request for Proposals (RFP) on November 12 and December 4 at 2:00–4:00pm ET.

Adobe Connect Webinar 1

November 12, 2014

2:00–4:00 PM EST

Call-in number: (866) 299-3188

Conference code: 2025662772#

Summary: This webinar will provide an overview of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training (EWDJT) Grant Application Guidelines/Request for Proposals (RFP) and competition. Prospective applicants will be provided an opportunity to ask questions and gain useful information for submitting a strong proposal. Changes from the FY14 EWDJT competition will also be covered.

To join the meeting, please go to <https://epa.connectsolutions.com/r53z0s9dvvb4/>.

Adobe Connect Webinar 2

December 4, 2014

2:00–4:00 PM EST

Call-in number: (866) 299-3188

Conference code: 2025662772#

Summary: This webinar will provide an overview of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training (EWDJT) Grant Application Guidelines/Request for Proposals (RFP) and competition. Prospective applicants will be provided an opportunity to ask questions and gain useful information for submitting a strong proposal. Changes from the FY14 EWDJT competition will also be covered.

To join the meeting, please go to <https://epa.connectsolutions.com/ewdjt2014/>.

Featured Guest: Civic Works/B'More Green, Baltimore, MD—Gicele Fundales

Thanks, Gicele, for your informative presentation.

Education, Skills Development, and Community Service

With Youthbuild, Urban Farming, Americorps, and Green Careers Programs, Civic Works strengthens Baltimore's communities through education, skills development, and community service. As an urban community service organization, Civic Works has a broad mission in a large community. Divided into several missions including job training, education, green homes, green spaces, and healthy communities, B'More Green is part of the Center for Green Jobs. Other notable activities as part of Civic Works include urban farming, community abandoned lots, Youth Build programs, college prep, and service opportunities for Americorps volunteers. B'More Green stands on its own, but adds to a critical mass allowing Civic Works to fill its mission of training, education, and community service.

The B'More Green EWDJT program received EPA Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training awards in 2009, 2011, and again in 2014. While the EWDJT program has operated for over 5 years, the Civic Works parent organization has served community residents for over 20 years. Together they have learned to leverage programs creating an impressive community service organization helping underserved residents of Baltimore. B'More Green EWDJT combines volunteerism, strong employer support, and philanthropy to leverage available EPA funding.

Their two-year case management and tracking program after graduation is one of the best in the EWDJT program, resulting in a placement rate of 90% and a \$12–\$16 per hour starting wage.

Targeted Community

B'More Green targets unemployed and underemployed Baltimore residents living in impacted communities with a focus on ex-offenders, veterans, people suffering from mental illness, recovering drug abusers, homeless individuals, and minorities.

Path to EWDJT for Community Residents

2009—Applied for and received the first EPA EWDJT grant

2011—Re-competed and awarded a second stimulus EPA EWDJT grant

2014—Re-competed and awarded its current EPA EWDJT grant

Leveraged Resources

B'More Green, unlike many EWDJT grantees, does not rely extensively on services provided by the local Workforce Investment Board. Instead, it leverages resources from employers, volunteers, donations, and philanthropic grants and services.

Key Partners

- Our Daily Bread Employment Center
- Baltimore Child Support Office
- Maryland New Directions
- Episcopal Community Services
- Baltimore Development Corporation
- Numerous community-based organizations
- Environmental employers

Program Challenges

As an EWDJT program in a large urban community, B'More Green must ration 20 available slots in each cycle of its training program. Finding the best fit for 20 participants from over 100 applicants is a major program challenge. This challenge is addressed by a rigorous application and screening process.

Core Training Program

- 146 hours of instruction over 4 1/2 weeks on intensive continuous training (daytime training)
- Civic Works and its partners are leveraging an additional 40 hours of life skills and job readiness training. Funding comes from leveraged sources.
- A total of seven state or federal certifications—depending on employer needs (Note that the training program is highly influenced by employer needs)
- HAZWOPER 40hr, OSHA 29 CFR 1910.120
- OSHA confined space entry
- Maryland lead abatement worker
- OSHA hazardous site worker protection and emergency response
- EPA AHERA supervisor certification
- OSHA blood borne pathogens certification
- Fall protection certification

Student Recruitment

1. Tuesday nights provide information sessions, open house, and presentations.
2. Interested residents complete written applications.
3. Applicants undergo preliminary interviews.
4. Drug and background checks are performed.
5. A second and more extensive interview with staff, trainers, placement staff, and a case manager.
6. A group decision based on each of the above evaluations.

Training Delivery, Services, and Retention

1. Upon acceptance, a case manager reviews issues that may impede training and placement.
2. Impediments such as transportation, daycare, housing, probation, and legal issues are addressed.
3. Additional support agencies are brought into the process as required.
4. Case managers, trainers, and program staff monitor participant progress for the duration of the program.
5. Issues as they arise during training are resolved with case manager involvement.

As part of the ancillary training, personal development and job readiness skills are provided.

Graduate Placement and Tracking

Graduates receive a program diploma and numerous state and federal individual course certifications.

B'More Green has an exemplary placement and tracking program.

1. Placement and tracking staff follow graduates on a monthly basis for two years.
2. Contact is made by phone or in person.
3. Case managers track issues and provide follow up services as needed.
4. Graduate job performance is evaluated with frequent contact with employers and supervisors.
5. Encouragement to follow a career path is part of every placement.

The process of placement, tracking, and evaluation is credited for the success of the overall program. Employers are impressed with the concern and attention given to each program graduate. Again, funding for this additional level of service is provided by private foundation and community donations.

Summary Notes

The two most important factors attributed to the success of B'More Green are:

1. Create an employer-driven EWDJT program. Employers must be on the advisory board and influence the technical curriculum as well as professional development services.
2. With cooperation from employers, the EWDJT program must address the labor needs of the community. Labor market assessments are essential and must be dynamic as employer needs may change from cycle to cycle.

Contact and Additional Information

Gicele would be happy to discuss issues associated with the B'More Green program including the use of leveraged resources, student evaluation, placement, and tracking.

Gicele Fundales

Civic Works

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Baltimore, MD 21206

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Networking News

2015 National Brownfields Training Conference

The 2015 National Brownfields Training Conference will be held in Chicago, IL, September 2–4, 2015. The Conference will be held at the Chicago Hilton on Michigan Ave. Additional meeting space and sleeping rooms will be available at the Palmer House Hilton. Please visit the Conference Website for additional information at www.brownfieldsconference.org.

The deadline for session proposal submission has been EXTENDED until December 8, 2014! What do YOU want to see at Brownfields 2015?

What Topics Are Included in the Program?

The Brownfields 2015 Planning Committee is particularly interested in topics related to:

- Environmental assessment and cleanup
- Traditional and innovative financing approaches
- Marketing, real estate and economic development
- Planning strategies for better communities
- Incorporating sustainability into redevelopment activities
- Civic and community engagement
- Addressing liability and enforcement issues
- State, tribal and local partnerships

HMTRI has submitted a request to conduct a roundtable session for EWDJT grantees. We would like to organize an open discussion with all our EWDJT grantees and interested stakeholders.

EPA grantees are encouraged to submit ideas showcasing their individual accomplishments and good work.

Good Jobs, Green Jobs 2015

The Good Jobs, Green Jobs Conference will begin on April 13, 2015, at the Washington Hilton Hotel. Registration will open soon, but for now, make sure you're free to join hundreds of labor, environmental, business, non-profit, and civic leaders for Good Jobs, Green Jobs 2015.

Using the HMTRI Listserve

The EWDJT Grantee Listserve has been updated to include all of the new grantees who attended the *Annual Environmental Job Development All-Grantee Meeting* in October in Alexandria, VA. For some of you, this is new information. For others, this is a reminder of the benefits of using this Listserve as a networking tool.

Using this Listserve is just like sending a normal email. The only difference is that a single email address includes many recipients. Members of this Listserve include attendees of this year's meeting and past grantee meetings. The email address to use to post a message to this Listserve is jtgrantees@ateec.org. You may want to add this to your email address book.

Health & Safety Training for Grantee Trainers—CCCHST GreatEST Institute

Health and Safety Training for grantee trainers—CCCHST GreatEST Institute

Many of you are familiar with the CCCHST GreatEST Institute, the annual two-week Train-the-Trainer sponsored by HMTRI's partner, the Partnership for Environmental Technology Education (PETE). Many of you have been selected to attend in past years.

The 2015 dates have been confirmed. The Institute is for your trainers only. This is not a first come/first served program. Applications will be reviewed by a team who will select participants based on the trainer's experience, and the entity's affiliations, and projected number of students to be trained.

The 2015 applications are available on the PETE website at <http://nationalpete.org/>.

Funding and Coordination Opportunities

EPA Awards 2014 Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Cooperative Agreements

WASHINGTON—The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced competitive cooperative agreements with 12 community-based organizations working to address environmental justice issues nationwide. The Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving (EJCPS) Cooperative Agreement Program provides funding for non-profit and tribal organizations to partner with stakeholders from across industry, government, and academia to develop and implement solutions that significantly address environmental and/or public health issues in American communities.

“These cooperative agreements empower communities to implement environmental protection projects locally,” said EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy. “With these agreements, EPA advances our commitment to communities by providing financial and technical assistance to take action against environmental harm.”

In 2003, EPA's Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) launched the first solicitation for the EJCPS Cooperative Agreement Program. Since the Program's inception, EPA has provided funding to 50 projects to help communities understand and address exposure to environmental harms and risks. Each of this year's recipients are awarded up to \$120,000 to support two-year projects, including identifying and reducing sources of air pollution, reducing lead exposure in homes of low-income residents, and the cleanup and repurposing of community dump sites. Projects must use the Collaborative Problem Solving model, comprised of seven elements of a successful collaborative partnership, to address local environmental and/or public health issues.

Environmental justice is defined as the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race or income, in the environmental decision-making process. These awards represent EPA's commitment to promoting localized, community-based actions to address environmental justice issues.

The twelve cooperative agreements total about \$1.4 million. The selected recipients are:

- * Montachusett Opportunity Council, Fitchburg, Massachusetts
- * Partners for a Healthier Community, Inc., Springfield, Massachusetts
- * Desarrollo Integral del Sur, Inc., Peñuelas, Puerto Rico
- * Greensboro Housing Coalition, Greensboro, North Carolina
- * Mississippi Conference of Black Mayors, Yazoo City, Mississippi
- * Southwest Detroit Environmental Vision Project, Detroit, Michigan
- * Groundwork New Orleans, New Orleans, Louisiana
- * Trailnet, Inc., St. Louis, Missouri
- * Conejos County Clean Water, Inc., Antonito, Colorado
- * Environmental Health Coalition, San Diego, California
- * Tolani Lake Enterprise, Navajo Nation, Northeast Arizona
- * Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition, Seattle, Washington

Please visit <http://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/resources/publications/grants/cps-project-abstracts-2014.pdf> for a complete listing of the 2014 Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Cooperative Agreement recipients and project descriptions.

EPA New Request for Proposals: 2015 Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup Grants

These brownfields grants may be used to address sites contaminated by petroleum and hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants (including hazardous substances co-mingled with petroleum). Opportunities for funding are as follows: Brownfields Assessment Grants (each funded up to \$200,000 over three years; Assessment Coalitions are funded up to \$600,000 over three years) and Brownfields Cleanup Grants (each funded up to \$200,000 over three years). Please note that applicants who received an Assessment grant from EPA in Fiscal Year 2014 (FY14) are eligible to apply under this competition. If the applicant was a member of a coalition that was awarded a grant in FY14, that applicant is also eligible to apply under this assessment competition. The proposal submission deadline is December 19, 2014. Please visit [EPA's Brownfields website](#) for more information.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Next PLC Session: November 19, 2014 at 2:00 p.m. EST

Feel free to invite a guest! Send your contact information to Mike Senew at msenew@aol.com.

Visit our *Brownfields Toolbox* Web site at <http://www.brownfields-toolbox.org> for more information on Brownfields Job Training programs. All PLC session notes and recordings are also located on the *Brownfields Toolbox* Web site at <http://brownfields-toolbox.org/plc-corner/>.

NOTE: The PLC brings together ideas and opinions of individuals interested in environmental workforce development and training. Ideas and opinions are not those of EPA, its policy or opinions and should not be taken as official guidance.